

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY MADRID

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

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CINCLANT

CINCUSAREUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

CINCUSAFE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 2931

REF: A. DPC/D(75)12

B. MCM-30-75

C. USNATO 2729

BEGIN SUMMARY: DEFENSE MINISTERS ENDORSED THE INTIATION OF PREFINANCED CONTRACT DFinition STUDIES ON THE US E-3A (AWACS) AND THE STABLISHMENT OF A STEERING COMMITTEE AND NATO PROGRAM OFFICE TO MANAGE THE STUDIES. THEY AGREED TO CONSIDER THE MATTER FURTHER IN DEC 1975. END SUMMARY.

1. DEFENSE MINISTERS NOTED THE REPORTS ON A NATO AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING AND CONTROL SYSTEM (AEW&C) FROM THE CONFERENCE OF NATIONAL ARMAMENT DIRECTORES (ANNEX I TO DPC/D(75)12, REF A) AND THE MILITARY COMMITTEE (MCM-30-75), REF B) AND ENDORSED THE ARRANGEMENTS MADE BY CNAD TO INITIATE AND MANAGE CONTRACT DEFINITION STUDIES. THEY AGREED TO CONSIDER CONFIDENTIAL

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THE MATTER FURTHER AT THEIR DEC 1975 MEETING AND EMPHASIZED THAT ENDORSING THE CONTRACT DEFINITION STUDIES DID NOT COMMIT ANY NATION TO A NATO PROGRAM OR PREJUDICE ITS POSTITION IN DEC 75.

2. VREDELING (THE NETHERLANDS) AND MOLLER (DENMARK) REPEATED THE RESERVATIONS EXPRESSED AT THE 14 MAY 75 MEETING OF THE NAC (REF C, USNATO 2729), WHICH ARE ALSO DOCUMENTED AS FOOTNOTES TO DPC/D(75)2 AND MCM-30-75, BUT DID NOT OBJECT TO INTERESTED NATIONS PROCEEDING WITH THE CONTRACT DEFINITION STUDIES. VREDELING STATED THE NETHERLANDS WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE NATO AEW&C STEERING COMMITTEE. DE STAERCCKE (BELGIUM) STATED THAT BELGIUM CANNOT TAKE PART IN THE STUDIES OR OR ANY SUBSEQUENT PROJECT. FORLANI (ITALY) REPEATED ITALIAN RESERVATIONS, BUT STATED ITALY AGREES TO, AND WILL PARTICIPATE IN, THE CONTRACT DEFINITION STUDIES WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE SOUTHERN FLANK WOULD BE STUDIED IN THE SAME DEPTH AS OTHER REGIONS AND THAT POTENTIAL E-3A CONTRIBUTION TO THE OVERALL AIR DEFENSE EFFORT WOULD BE VALIDATED. KRAPF, (FRG) STATED IT WAS PREMATURE TO DISCUSS HOW THE FUNDING WOULD BE SHARED, BUT THAT NO EXISTING FORMULA SEEMS RIGHT. HE SAID THE FRG HOPED ALL NATIONS WOULD PARTICIPATE, AND WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE SHORT TIME AVAILABLE BEFORE DEC 75 TO PROGRAM FUNDS FOR THE PROJECT.

3. MASON (UK SAID THE UK VIEWS THE REQUIREMENT AS A REQUIREMENT FOR NATO AS A WHOLE WHICH SHOULD BE COMMONLY FUNDED AND OPERATED. HE AGREED WITH SELECTION OF THE US E-3A AS THE BEST SYSTEM, BUT CONFIRMED THAT THE UK WOULD CONTINUE WITH PROJECT DEFINITION OF THE UK NIMROD SYSTEM AS A FALLBACK ALTERNATIVE AND OFFERED TO EXTEND THE UK STUDIES TO INCLUDE NATO REQUIREMENTS IF NATO WOULD CONTRIBUTE COMMON FUNDING TO THE STUDIES. MASON STATED THE NIMROD WAS A "REASONABLE ALTERNATIVE OPTION" FOR NATO.

4. ADMIRAL SIR PETER HILL NORTON, CHAIRMAN OF THE MILITARY COMMITTEE SAID HE WANTED TO EMPHASIZE TWO POINTS WHICH MAY NOT STAND OUT CLEARLY ENOUGH IN MCM-30-75, FIRST, THE RUSSIANS ALREADY HAVE AN AEW&C SYSTEM FLYING AND ARE AWARE OF NATO'S GAP IN LOW LEVEL COVERAGE; CONSEQUENTLY, CONFIDENTIAL

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A NATO AEW&C SYSTEM WOULD ADD GREATLY TO NATO'S DETERRENCE AS WELL AS NATO'S WARTIME CAPABILITIES. SECONDLY, WHILE MINISTERS WERE CONCERNED ABOUT THE COST OF AN AEW&C SYSTEM, THE COST WAS SMALL COMPARED TO THE INVESTMENT IN OVERALL NATO AIR DEFENSES AND AN AEW&C SYSTEM WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ALL THE HIGH VALUE AIR DEFENSE WEAPONS AND SYSTEMS. BRUCE

CONFIDENTIAL

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